



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

SOFT SKILLS: ARE THEY EXISTED IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?

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ABSTRACT

Soft skills are different than hard skills. Hard skills are visible, accessible; soft skills are difficult to acquire, difficult to adapt. Few skills could be incorporative where as few are not. Corporate sector is more polished due to practicing soft skills. In corporate and private sector, training is given soft skills like stress management, time management, anger control are trainable but few skills as team work, conflict resolution, communication skills are depended on one's quality for particularly that skill. In government sector there is hardly any soft skill used purposely. In fact if soft skills will be practices, administration could transform in good administration. In Indian administration, no soft skill is experienced. If it will be used public administration will become more polished, transparent, speedy and more citizen-centric.

Introduction

The corporate sector is more polished than government sector in terms of attitude, communication, manners and etiquettes. Corporations always foster their employee to reach newer levels of personal excellence. The employers are aware of that the high-quality work force makes direct difference to the company's production, finance and competitiveness. At the other side employees also grab the chance for self-improvement and bright career. Corporate sector has a prolonged history of development of human resource and employee skills. It is the preferred career by many youngsters not because corporations are perceived to be good paymasters, but also because they are thought of as very fair places, which recognize and reward employee excellence. Comparatively in government sector polished personality in India is not much preferred in terms of attitude, communication, manners and etiquettes, where as a government servant requires to acquire minimum soft skills like time management, control on anger, communication skill while dealing to a common man. Unfortunately, in government sector in India the thought is not much considered. Though public administration is citizen-centric, do not assume people-oriented skills. There is a huge lacuna of service-orientation of administration in India. Obviously, state roles back behind the market. This paper discusses on the same issue.

Research Methodology

Interview and observation method is used in this study. The author of this paper has interviewed to 10 administrative officers about their skills; and the result is there is no any systematic or formal training. Also she has talked with 100 visitors of these officers which conclude that absence of soft skills among officers causes issues like delays, red-tapism, favoritism, non-responsiveness in administrative system.

What and how are Soft Skills?

Soft skills are those skills over and above the technical knowledge and expertise in the chosen field-required for an individual to relate to and survive and succeed in his or her environment. (Gopalswamy Ramesh and Mahadevan Ramesh) Soft skills are important for personal, academic and professional success. The skills which are not visible but are inherited in every person are called soft skills. A person can acquire specific professional skills in schools, colleges, educational institutes but soft skills are not taught. Soft skills are combination of various things such as outer personality, inner soul, speaking, way of thinking, command of language etc...it is un-ended. It is varied person to person, culture to culture, time to time and situation to situation. Soft skills are un-quantifiable; e.g. good listener-there is no any measurement how much good the listener should be. It is not numeric. Soft skills are subjective. As it is varied could not

spell out in a word or objectively. 'Good' and 'bad' are very vast words. How much a thing might be good is not answerable. Soft Skills Quotient (SSQ) is not numeric.

Which skills are soft skills?

Following are the soft skills those are basic administrative skills:

- 1) Attitude
- 2) Communication
- 3) Good Manners
- 4) Etiquettes
- 5) Speaking
- 6) Way of thinking
- 7) Command on language
- 8) Team Work
- 9) Time Management
- 10) Stress Control
- 11) Control on Anger
- 12) Conflict Resolution
- 13) Listening Ability
- 14) Willingness to take ownership
- 15) Adaptability
- 16) Commitment
- 17) Trustworthiness
- 18) Accountability
- 19) Desire to Advance
- 20) Initiatives
- 21) Relationship Building

These skills are adaptable. Civil service maintains high level of professionalism. Professional development is the process by which a person maintains the quality and relevance of professional services throughout his/her working life. (Bharadwaj Mohan) Professional skills could be developed through these soft skills. If well done, training in these basic administrative skills should develop executive abilities more surely and more rapidly than through unorganized experience.

Soft skills and administrators

Our world is witnessing a major change in communication patterns with expanding social spheres, openness in communication and professionals working in multilateral environments. It is crucial therefore that India's workforce remains world class, through re-training and continuous improvement, to remain competent, competitive and successful. (Ramesh Gopalswamy, Ramesh Mahadevan) Communication skills and soft skills are essential to everyone to interact efficiently and effectively with various people in various situations. (Kumar Suresh, Sreehari, Savithri) In a multi-dimensional country like India every day civil servant deals with hundreds of issues of hundreds of persons. People are illiterate or not knowledgeable and aware of official

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procedures. When they appear in any government office, they experience ill-treatment. It causes a huge gap between administration and common man. At the other hand administering has become much complicated, hard and challenging. Basically public administration is the national service. Off course, to keep balance between people and system, exercising soft skills is necessary for civil servant.

According to Peter Drucker, professionals in the 21st century must be workers who manage themselves using 'soft skills' to relate to others in workplace. A good administrator must possess good qualities and skills. The skill conception of administration suggests that we may hope to improvise our administrative effectiveness and to develop better administrators for the future. This skill conception implies learning by doing. Different people learn in different ways, but skills are developed through practice and through relating learning to one's own personal experience and background. In private or corporate sector, formal training is given though soft skills are very informal in nature. Through development of soft skills it is tried to turn an employee as per that particular organization wants him/her to be. Also working capacity, ability and power of an employee is increased through training for soft skills. In government sector such type of training is not given. Not in any training institute or in any syllabus soft skill is included. If one wants to stop State's rolling back practicing soft skills is necessary.

For example, we will look upon a skill of team working. In recent times, there has been paradigm shift in the concept of administering. Administration has become more citizen-centric. There is a shift from technical perspective to sensitive perspective. While we talk about team work, administrator must know the basics of team intelligence, team's vision, mission and goals, cultivation of relationship in the team, networking, and team issues. The leader plays a role of glue that binds the team. Once the leader starts cherishing team his/her importance in organization grows automatically. It makes easy to achieve the goals for whole team. Any administrative department suffers by the problems such as senior-junior position, generalist-specialist position. Ego is a great hurdle in government departments. It makes difficult to accomplish the goals; in this situation all the officers and personnel needs training how to work in a team. Team management could be achieved through training but there is no any module in trainings which inculcate the mannerism to work in a team. Team can achieve target very fast than individual can, Group working can eliminate faults in job. It is always supportive to the pre-decided goal achievement.

To Sum up

According to Luthur Gulick, administration involves the determination of major policy, the development and adoption of specific programmes, creation of the organization, provision of personnel, authorization of finances, administrative supervision, coordination and control of activities; and the audit and review of result. (Gulick Luthur, 181-183) It is a set of multi-activities that obliges a set of qualities. Only hard skill is not enough to work. In fact, hard skill is necessary to enter in service; once entered one needs to possess soft skills in routine work. Soft skills are a demand of daily work. Possessing soft skills will increase working speed, transparency and healthiness in administration. It will bring good governance in Indian systems.

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